

considering subjects of this kind with the aid of books; that illustrations were not drawn to the same scale. He said that considerations of this sort were much neglected in buildings. For example, we found the eustyle in relief, which made all the difference, and windows imprisoned as it were between the columns. He instanced the front of Lord Spencer's house, in the Green-park, as an example of the successful treatment of an engaged order with windows, the columns being there placed diastyle, and consequently there was complete space for the windows, and all dressings. In our copies of Greek temples on the contrary, we had generally fallen into the error which the architect of that beautiful building had avoided. We had, indeed, been Greek mad, but not from too much learning, but from too little. He believed that, some day, a type of proportion would be discovered, applicable to every building. Wren had an eye to this. The interior of St. James's Church, Piccadilly, had a certain proportion of height, and magnitude was gained by that proportion. He instanced Sir Robert Taylor's garden-front of the Bank, as an instance of successful proportion. Sanmichele was a great master in this; his gate in, the front of the Lido had a rusticated Doric order, managed with the hand of a giant. In civic buildings he said, where frequent piers could not be avoided, character might be given by decorating the alternate windows.

The principle of a certain modulus of proportion, applied to interiors. St. Peter's, at Rome, ought to have had the bridge-like expanse, rather than, with a more vast dimension, the ordinary proportion of a church. In mediæval architecture, the height was governed by the point of an equilateral triangle, and Wren was so true a mason, that he followed the same method. He concluded by remarking, that although there were many things which could hardly be taught, it behoved us still to reflect, and to acquire all the skill which we could possess, by learning on every side, in preference to depending upon the inspiration of genius.

ENFRANCHISEMENT OF LEASEHOLDS.

As no question of a novel nature can have a more beneficial influence upon the arts and architecture, nor a greater claim to the attention of the resident population of the metropolis, than this, no apology is needed for a few additional remarks upon it.

Having before shown that the proprietary, or landlord class, can make no objection to enfranchisement on the score of inequitable adjustment, and that full compensation can be meted out to them by valuation juries,—now it only remains to prove,—

That changes more direct, not to say more arbitrary and violent, have been made by enactments of the legislative Parliament, in all sorts of property, whether lay or ecclesiastical, corporate or private.

That where the interests of the many, urged by the public voice, or the expediency of an altered system of law (led on by retired judges) required a sweeping change in our social or relative positions as to property, no respect for private privileges interposed to stop the invasion of rights hitherto considered sacred.

If rights in law were immutable, and the "*nolumus leges Angliæ mutari*" of Magna Charta, were still to coerce the advances of science and arts, and to conserve the usages of black letter jurisprudence, what a standstill generation should we be! What was suited to the state of society in the days of King John, became prejudicial in those of Henry the Eighth; and the expanding mind of a great nation in the latter reigns—discovering that, in progression of time and prosperity, the shackles of old institutions were unsuited to the giant growth of a matured power—emancipated itself from the trammels of prejudice, and scrupled not to reform or abrogate those laws which repressed its lucrant energies. It was in this spirit that the Act of Limitation was passed which abolished, totally abolished, all claims, grounded on the 21st James II., to debt, on which legal process had not been entered up for a period of six years. If any one act of the Legislature

could be stigmatized as an act of spoliation, it was that which deprived the creditor, who was too lenient, or perhaps who had slept upon his right, of all suit or demand against his debtor, who had eluded or avoided the demand of his debt for that period. It would be curious to ascertain what might have been the sum total of immunity from payment consequent upon that act; of how many millions, or hundreds of millions the tradesmen and merchant have been debarred, and what portion of that immunity fell into the lap of the Lords and Commons, their relatives, and adherents. In this case the right of the honest tradesman was lost, and totally confiscated, no valuation having here interposed to give him a *pro tanto* annuity over time, as a requital; and yet we heard little complaint, certainly of no public demonstration against the passing of that law, for it was manifest to all that much litigation was saved, and the greater good achieved by that act of extinction. Another very recent interference with vested rights, took place on the enactment of 34 William IV., chapter 27. By that statute the fact of possession for twenty years conferred on the holder or tenant of fixed property, the absolute freehold title as indefeasible against all claimants. Here was an utter annihilation and defeasance of all heritable claims on property, so circumstanced, how clear soever might be its deduction, and although the family of the rightful claimant might have been in possession up to twenty-one years antecedent, or his ancestors from the days of Harold in lineal succession.

We will not inquire what were the operations of this statute, nor what complications of interests were set at rest by it, but only adduce these examples to prove that legislative wisdom hath abrogated and wholly annulled usages which hitherto admitted claims (rightful claims) to fixed property, and that, too, without contemplating any equivalent.

The remarks which have been made by powerful parties who are opposed to the enfranchisement of leasehold property, induce me to offer these examples in addition to those already instanced, of "the enfranchisement of copyhold tenures," and the "valuation, freehold, leasehold, copyhold, &c. Act, empowering railway companies to purchase."

However, in the proposed enfranchisement, or rather, the continuation in perpetuity of existing leases (originally above twenty-one years) to the tenants in possession, the rents now payable must also be continued in perpetuity; and as in the great majority of cases, householders wishing to renew or perpetuate their tenures, would take that perpetuity at an increased rental, rather than on purchase: so the immediate yearly income of the great landlords should be vastly increased; as, for instance, a house in Belgrave-square having 60 years to run, at 100*l.* a-year ground-rent, but now worth in the market 500*l.* a-year, might, by the payment (or valuation), be subjected to an additional 50*l.* a-year; a sum which, by accumulation on compound interest, must, in 60 years, exceed the value of the mansion at the end of the lease.

In the valuation of shorter terms, unexpired, the increased rent would be proportionately larger; as for example, a house in Grosvenor-square having but 20 years of lease to expire, and subject to 50*l.* a-year, the present value being 500*l.* a-year; in this case 150*l.* a-year additional rent for the perpetuity might not be considered excessive; but however it might appear to others, the occupant would, in nine cases out of ten, rather pay it than suffer his term to lapse; and the more especially so, as on the renewed lease he might modernize, improve, and consolidate his mansion; whereas, if he were to suffer the lease to lapse, he must continue to occupy a dingy dwelling, falling into decadence, unsuited to his requirements, and to the improving taste of the day.

Hence it is clear that the head proprietor can in no case get less than his original rent, with a sum of money equivalent to the improved value of the premises leased in perpetuity; and that by such arrangements as should give an increased rental, instead of purchase, the present actual rental of the landlord must be trebled.

On one estate only, the estimate of increase (rough though it be) is not far from the mark. It stands thus: Of 200,000*l.* a-year, one-half

would be perpetuated on an increased rental adding at once 200,000*l.* a-year! one-fourth would be purchased at the present estimated rental, or 50,000*l.* a-year, being the reduplicated amount of rent, and thus, at twenty years' purchase, would produce one million in money, which would be, in round numbers, (at medium fund price) 30,000*l.* a-year—leaving still the head rent undisturbed; and the other fourth part would probably be allowed to run out of lease.

This estate then, now producing 200,000*l.* a-year, by such regulation would return 330,000*l.* a-year until the lapse of the remaining fourth part, and of that portion the returns would be trebled on reletting, realizing a total income of 480,000*l.* a-year.

In estates which are strictly entailed, provision should be made by the Legislature for entailing in the funds of the country the amount of purchase money paid on enfranchisement, these funds being subject to the same limitations as the houses converted into money. On the estate before referred to, no less a sum than one million would probably be invested,—this on only one estate. The total sum so invested must be in the event enormous; and the fixed capitalization of such amounts would obviously tend to the stability of Consols, from the value of which, at the time of enfranchisement, the equivalent, or price, would be calculated.

No one can argue that this is a confiscation; in truth there are but very few great proprietors in London and the environs—I should say but twenty at the most, possessing colossal incomes; and taking these twenty at an average of 2,000 houses each, there are of consequence 40,000 householders who would be benefited by the proposed enfranchisement, who, being tenants at a rent certain (that rent not being immoderate), would expend large sums in the consolidation and improvement, as well as the embellishment of their holdings. What a stimulus would this apply to the languishing tradesman—the bricklayer, mason, carpenter, and all the artists who follow in their train!

But let the present system of terminable leases go on for fifty years more, and then see the state of society,—all the habitations of the great towns will be at the disposal of twenty proprietors, who may expel, evict, dispossess, and disperse the whole population, as seems best to their lordly wisdom or caprice. Go thou there—rest thou here—this square shall be the abode of lords, that of commoners; this street shall be allotted to the squirearchy, and that to the professions!

One incident may explain more forcibly the tendency of the present practice of leasing than all that has preceded:—a certain tract of fields on the leviathan estate near Vauxhall, was let out lately to a great building firm, on a lease for ninety years, on condition of building 5,000 houses; and this at a rental of 5,000*l.* a-year,—these houses were to be of a class to assure the expenditure of 1,000*l.* or 1,500*l.* a house. It requires no complex arithmetic to prove that at the end of the term, or on the lapse of three generations, the enormous sum of five millions, disbursed by the public, must, at the expiration of that term, fall into the possession of the lessor lord, or of his posterity; and that the rental of those houses so erected by the community, if averaged at only 100*l.* a year, must make the enormous addition of 500,000*l.* to the rental of the already too-rich landlord. Is this for the advantage of the community? that one family should command whole districts of habitations, and that all mankind should be ousted? The reverse conclusion is so obvious that it needs no elucidation; for better is it that 5,000 householders, with an interest in the tenements, should enjoy their privileges, municipal and other, than that all should fall into only one heritage. But at the end of the ninety-nine years, not only these 5,000 houses, but also, in half that period, 5,000 more of the old town (now the fashionable part), must fall to the same proprietor, unless the wisdom of our Legislature stop this frightful accumulation and forestalling of all fixed property in tenements. The forecast which provideth for a family should provide for a nation; and if the Legislature hath the power to interpose a safeguard for the people, there can be no reason why they should not be protected, seeing that an equitable recompense can be made to all superior interests. The enfranchisement of